

# Belleville Police Department Summer Safety Tips



CHIEF OF POLICE MARK MINICHINI

**Summer is a fun time.  
Make it a safe time, too!**

Summer is approaching fast and many children will be home alone or watching younger siblings. To help families stay safe this summer, the Belleville Police Department has created the following list of summer safety tips. Parents are advised to discuss these safety tips with their children and assure that they have the safest summer possible!

## **WATER SAFETY:**

Drowning is one of the leading causes of child deaths each year. Here are some tips to help keep kids safe around water:

- **NEVER** leave children swimming unattended. Drowning can occur in an inch or two of water.
- Stay within an arm's length of small children in water to protect against rapid drowning.
- Warn children to never swim at a pool or beach alone or without a lifeguard.
- Train children to swim at an early age.
- Teach children that swimming in a pool is far different than swimming in open water (ocean).
- Be certain only qualified and undistracted adults are entrusted with supervising children in water.
- Always empty inflatable pools, buckets, pails and bathtubs after each use.
- Personal floatation devices do not guarantee water safety.

## **NEVER LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED IN A CAR:**

The temperature inside a car can get dangerously hot, even in moderate weather with the windows slightly down. Kids can suffer from heat stroke causing serious injuries and sometimes death. Simply leaving the air conditioner on doesn't make your child safe. A child could put the car in drive, get caught in a closing power window or be abducted.

Here are some tips to keep kids safe around cars:

- Never leave a child unattended in a car. Not even for a minute.

- Always lock your car and secure the keys so that your kids can't get to them.
- Warn your children about playing in and around cars.
- Install a trunk release mechanism so that kids can't get trapped inside the trunk.
- Get your kids out of the car first, and then worry about unloading the groceries and items out of the car.

### **CHILDREN WATCHING YOUNGER CHILDREN:**

The law does not designate the exact age at which a child can stay home alone or watch other children. Parents need to use a "reasonableness test" and consider the following.

- Can your child, regardless of his or her age, act reasonably under the circumstances?
- Is your child mature enough to know what to do in an emergency?
- If there is a fire, is your child mature enough to get out of the house?
- Is he or she mature enough to get other children out of the house?

### **SOME KEY THINGS YOUR CHILD SHOULD KNOW:**

- They should know their address, phone number, and who should be contacted if they need help.
- Discuss with them a list of "safe places" they can seek help. They can include:
  - a police officer or station
  - a fireman or station
  - the library
  - the recreation center
  - Also include some trusted neighbors or family who may live in the area
- Talk with them about when they should seek help. This may include:
  - If they are lost.
  - If someone is following them.
  - If a stranger approaches them and asks them to go with them or offers them something.
  - If someone starts a fight with them or tries to bully them.
  - If they just feel unsafe or uncomfortable in a situation
- Set Rules for Them When They are In the Community
  - Make them tell you where they are going.
  - Know who they are traveling with; and when they will be home.
  - Have them call or text you when they get to the location.

### **OTHER SUMMER SAFETY REMINDERS:**

- Have kids wear a properly fitted helmet when riding a bike, skateboard, scooter or rollerblading.
- Keep a shock-absorbing surface under and around home playground equipment.
- Always supervise kids on play equipment.
- Use caution with outdoor grills when children are present.
- Install window guards to prevent children from falling out of windows. Install in any room where young children spend time.
- Never depend on screens to keep children from falling out of windows.
- Limit sun exposure for kids and infants.
- Apply sunscreen, even on cloudy days, and reapply every two hours, or after swimming.

### **IMPORTANT RESOURCE NUMBERS:**

#### **Family Helpline**

1-800-THE KIDS

If you are feeling stressed out, call to speak anonymously with a trained volunteer who can listen and help.

#### **Child Abuse Hotline**

1-877 NJ ABUSE

(1-877-652-2873)

TTY 1-800-835-5510

#### **Department of Community Affairs**

609-633-6225

For more information about requirements for child safety.